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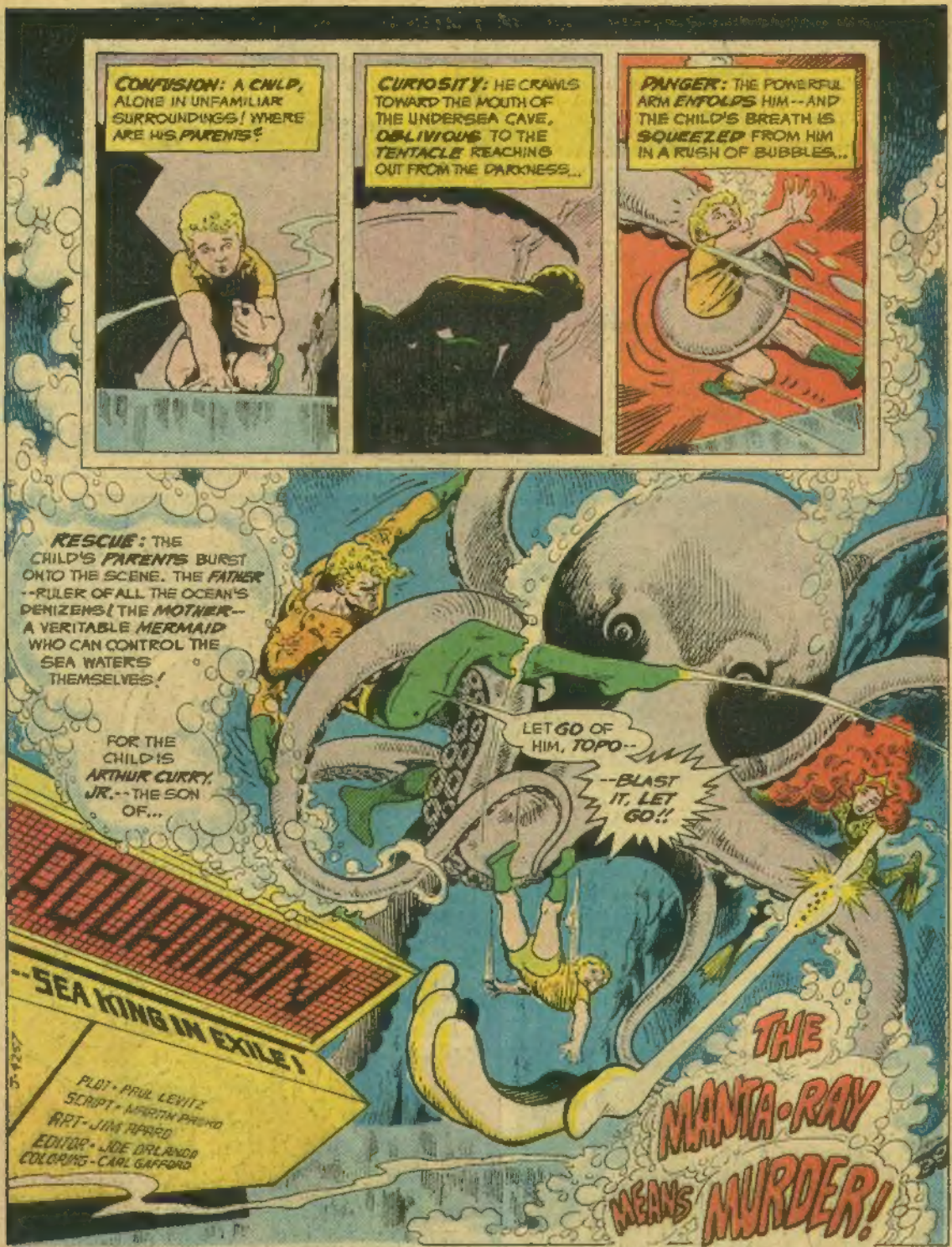
CONFUSION: A CHILD, ALONE IN UNFAMILIAR SURROUNDINGS! WHERE ARE HIS PARENTS?
CURIOSITY: HE CRAWLS TOWARD THE MOUTH OF THE UNDERSEA CAVE, OBLIVIOUS TO THE TENTACLE REACHING OUT FROM THE DARKNESS...
PANGER: THE POWERFUL ARM ENFOLDS HIM--AND THE CHILD'S BREATH IS SQUEEZED FROM HIM IN A RUSH OF BUBBLES...
RESCUE: THE CHILD'S PARENTS BURST ONTO THE SCENE. THE FATHER --RULER OF ALL THE OCEAN'S DENIZENS! THE MOTHER-- A VERITABLE MERMAID WHO CAN CONTROL THE SEA WATERS THEMSELVES!
FOR THE CHILD IS ARTHUR CURRY, JR.--THE SON OF...
LET GO OF HIM, TOPO--
--BLAST IT, LET GO!!
AQUAMAN
--SEA KING IN EXILE!
PLOT - PAUL LEVITZ
SCRIPT - MARTIN PASKO
ART - JIM APARO
EDITOR - JOE ORLANDO
COLORING - CARL GAFFORD
THE MANTA-RAY MEANS MURDER!

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WE CAN'T FAULT TOPO-- HE WAS JUST DOING HIS JOB, PLAYING BABYSITTER!
I GUESS HE DIDN'T REALIZE HE WAS CHOKING ARTHUR, JR. --NOT BEING THE BRIGHTEST CREATURE IN THE SEA.
MEEP
OUR SON IS UNHARMED, MY HUSBAND!
GOOD! I--?! THE VISI-PHONE!
ROBIN! WHAT'S THE GOOD WORD, CHUM?
THERE...UH... ISN'T ANY, I'M AFRAID. I'VE BEEN BUSTING MY CHOPS SEARCHING FOR DAYS--
--BUT I CAN'T FIND AQUALAD ANYWHERE!
WELL, THERE'S BEEN A NEW DEVELOPMENT:
AS I'VE TOLD YOU, I'VE BEEN DEPOSED AS KING OF ATLANTIS--
--AND REPLACED BY SOME CLOWN I'VE NEVER HEARD OF-- NAMED KARSHON!
THE COUNCIL GAVE ME SOME SONG AND DANCE ABOUT MY BEING AN ABSENTEE KING-- DERELICT IN MY DUTIES!--
--BUT HERE'S THE KICKER: I'VE BEEN EXILED FROM THE CITY-- AND TOLD IF I'M EVER SEEN THERE AGAIN, I'LL BE SHOT ON SIGHT!
DON'T ASK ME WHY-- IT'S ALL BEYOND ME.
BUT YOU MUST GET THROUGH TO AQUALAD--TELL HIM TO STAY AWAY FROM ATLANTIS...
...OR THE SAME MIGHT HAPPEN TO HIM!
SLAM
OVER AND OUT!

BUT WHAT OF THE MARINE MARVEL'S YOUNG ALLY? FOR THE ANSWER, WE MUST TURN OUR ATTENTION TO...
...THE MISSISSIPPI DELTA, WHERE A FLOATING NIGHT SPOT NAMED THE CLUB MARK TWAIN DRIFTS LAZILY NEAR THE SHORE.
AMONG THE AUDIENCE ENJOYING THE ONBOARD FLOOR SHOW: TWO VERY SPECIAL PATRONS...
HEY, GO EASY ON THAT CHAMPAGNE, TULA--!
DON'T BE SUCH A BUMMER, LOVER--I'M OVER 18... REMEMBER?
AND I WANT TO RELAX AND HAVE A GOOD TIME! I JUST WISH YOU'D DO LIKEWISE!
BUT I GUESS IT'S PERFECTLY IN CHARACTER FOR SOMEONE NAMED AQUALAD TO BE A WET BLANKET!
I HATE TO BRING YOU DOWN, BABY, BUT I'M HERE ON BUSINESS. AND I MAY NEED YOUR HELP IF MY SUSPICIONS ABOUT THIS PLACE ARE JUSTIFIED!
SO STAY STRAIGHT, HUH?
AND SPEAKING OF BUSINESS ...I THINK I'VE JUST SPOTTED SOME. THE KIND I CAME HERE TO STOP!
PARDON ME, MISS -- BUT I COULDN'T HELP NOTICING THE PACK OF "CIGARETTES" THAT.."GENTLEMAN" DROPPED ONTO YOUR TRAY!
ODD THAT IT SHOULD CONTAIN DIAMONDS--
--SMUGGLED DIAMONDS... ISN'T IT?
LISTEN, PUNK--
I'LL HANDLE THIS, SHIRLEY!
EH? SPEAK UP--I CAN'T HEAR YOU. THERE'S A GUN IN MY EAR!
THAT'S RIGHT! SO SHUT UP AND WALK TOWARD THE KITCHEN OR THERE'LL BE A BULLET IN YOUR BRAIN!

I FIGURED THE FEDS WOULD SEND SOME GUY TO SPY ON US SOONER OR LATER!
HOK
CAN'T FIGURE WHY THEY SENT A BOY TO DO A MAN'S JOB, THOUGH.
BUT SO WHAT?-- HERE, FELLAS ... BABYSIT A WHILE, HUH?
FEISTY LITTLE DEVIL, AIN'T HE?
BWUDD
IT ALMOST PAINS ME TO SEE 'EM WORK YOU OVER, KID!
I GOT ME A SON ABOUT YOUR AGE!
RIIIIPP
OH, YEAH? DOES HE KNOW WHAT KIND OF BILGE RAT HIS FATHER IS?
HEY LOOKIT-- HE'S WEARIN' SOME KINDA COSTUME--?
THE YOUTHFUL ATLANTEAN DOES NOT NOTICE THE CHEF BEHIND HIM, SNATCHING A STEAMING POT FROM THE RANGE...
...NOT UNTIL HE FEELS A TORRENT OF BOILING WATER CASCADE ONTO HIS BACK...
WHAT--?!
HSSSS
AT LEAST, HE THINKS IT'S BOILING--BUT HE CAN'T BE SURE.
HMM... THAT WAS NOT VERY BRIGHT, CHUCKLES...
SMAK
H-HUHN? HE DIDN'T EVEN PEEL IT!
CONTINUED ON 5SP PAGE FOLLOWING

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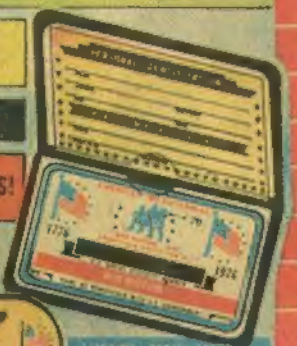

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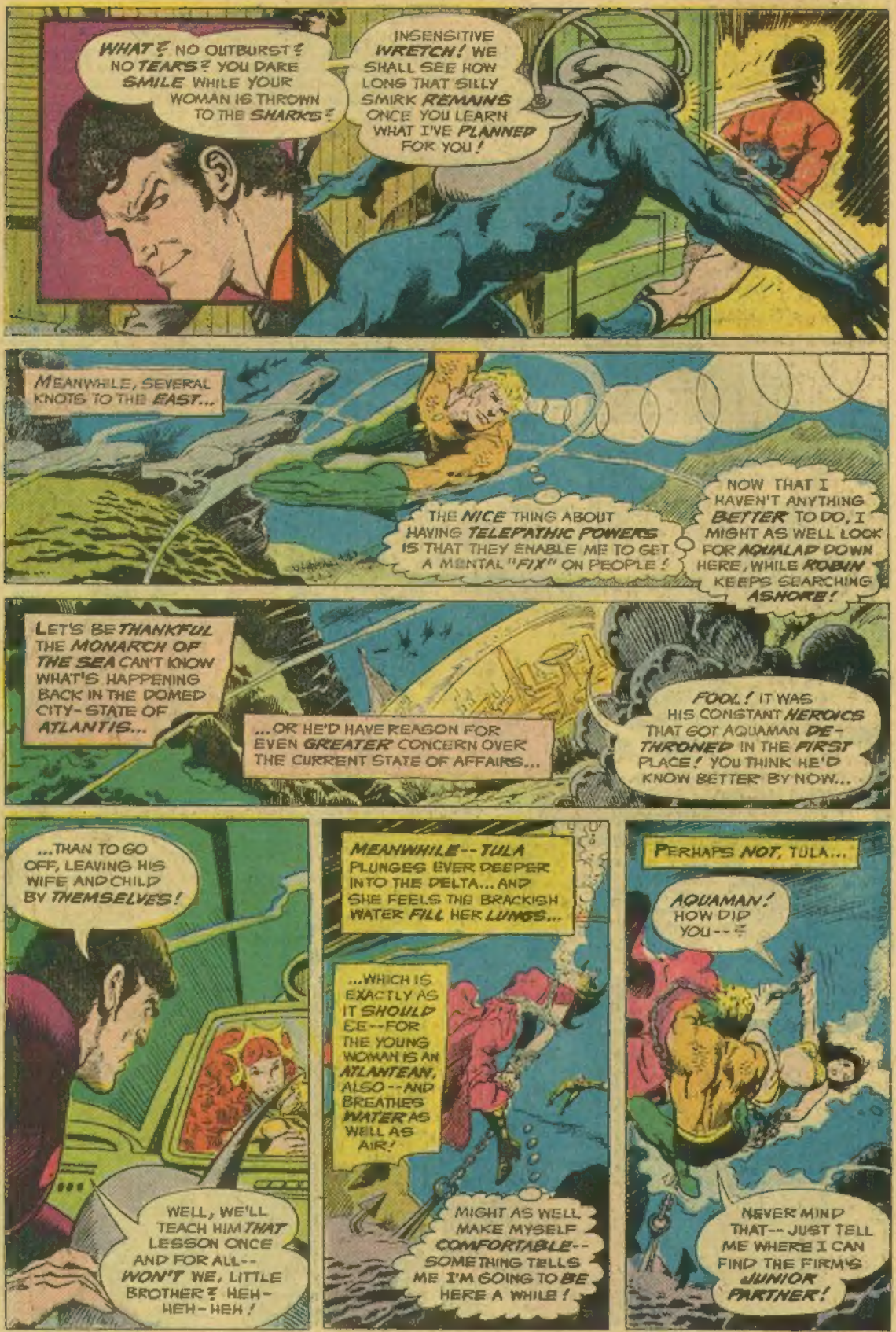
SPL
G
NO, NOT BRIGHT AT ALL--
UNNH!
THERE IS BRIGHT BURST BEHIND AQUALAD'S EYES, LIKE A FLASHBULB GOING OFF IN HIS HEAD...
...AND THEN--NOTHING...
...UNTIL HE IS GOADED BACK TO CONSCIOUSNESS BY A VOICE AS IRRITATING AS SANDPAPER ON A BLISTER...
GREETINGS, AQUALAD. YOU MUST EXCUSE MY ASSISTANTS-- THEY DIDN'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE. THEY SHOULD'VE SKIPPED THAT BOILING WATER...
...SINCE YOUR KIND CAN INSTANTLY ADJUST THEIR BODIES TO CHANGES IN WATER TEMPERATURE!
YOU!...
--BLACK MANTA!
AT YOUR DIS SERVICE. CURIOUS WHY I'D STOOP TO THIS PETTY SMUGGLING OPERATION?
MY BOY, YOU HAVEN'T BEGUN TO FATHOM THE EXTENT OF THIS ENDEAVOR--
BOSS--LOOK!
MY, BUT WE'RE GETTING SLOPPY!
DID NO ONE NOTICE THE FEMALE EAVESDROPPING--NO DOUBT THE BOY'S ACCOMPLICE, WAITING FOR ME TO REVEAL ALL MY SECRETS?
I'M AFRAID WE'LL HAVE TO DISAPPOINT HER!
KWAM
PRESENTLY...
I'LL SPARE YOU ANY FURTHER DISCOMFORT, MY DEAR--THAT ANCHOR WEIGHS A GREAT DEAL, I'M SURE!
IT IS SATISFACTION ENOUGH TO WATCH YOUR PARAMOUR'S REACTION AS YOU'RE THROWN OVERBOARD--
--NOW!


WHAT? NO OUTBURST? NO TEARS? YOU DARE SMILE WHILE YOUR WOMAN IS THROWN TO THE SHARKS?
INSENSITIVE WRETCH! WE SHALL SEE HOW LONG THAT SILLY SMIRK REMAINS ONCE YOU LEARN WHAT I'VE PLANNED FOR YOU!
MEANWHILE, SEVERAL KNOTS TO THE EAST...
THE NICE THING ABOUT HAVING TELEPATHIC POWERS IS THAT THEY ENABLE ME TO GET A MENTAL "FIX" ON PEOPLE!
NOW THAT I HAVEN'T ANYTHING BETTER TO DO, I MIGHT AS WELL LOOK FOR AQUALAD DOWN HERE, WHILE ROBIN KEEPS SEARCHING ASHORE!
LET'S BE THANKFUL THE MONARCH OF THE SEA CAN'T KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING BACK IN THE DOMED CITY-STATE OF ATLANTIS...
...OR HE'D HAVE REASON FOR EVEN GREATER CONCERN OVER THE CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS...
FOOL! IT WAS HIS CONSTANT HEROICS THAT GOT AQUAMAN DE-THRONED IN THE FIRST PLACE! YOU THINK HE'D KNOW BETTER BY NOW...
...THAN TO GO OFF, LEAVING HIS WIFE AND CHILD BY THEMSELVES!
WELL, WE'LL TEACH HIM THAT LESSON ONCE AND FOR ALL-- WON'T WE, LITTLE BROTHER? HEH-HEH-HEH!
MEANWHILE--TULA PLUNGES EVER DEEPER INTO THE DELTA... AND SHE FEELS THE BRACKISH WATER FILL HER LUNGS...
...WHICH IS EXACTLY AS IT SHOULD BE--FOR THE YOUNG WOMAN IS AN ATLANTEAN, ALSO--AND BREATHES WATER AS WELL AS AIR!
MIGHT AS WELL MAKE MYSELF COMFORTABLE-- SOMETHING TELLS ME I'M GOING TO BE HERE A WHILE!
PERHAPS NOT, TULA...
AQUAMAN! HOW DID YOU--?
NEVER MIND THAT--JUST TELL ME WHERE I CAN FIND THE FIRM'S JUNIOR PARTNER!

IN A VERY LARGE FISH-TANK AT THE MOMENT, AQUAMAN...
IN ADDITION TO MY USUAL MANTA-RAYS, THAT TANK CONTAINS SEVERAL OF THEIR COUSINS FROM THE ORDER BATOIDEI!
IF MY PETS DON'T STING YOU TO DEATH, THE RELATED SPECIES-- THE ELECTRIC RAY--WILL BRING YOUR LIFE TO A... AH... SHOCKING CONCLUSION! HA HA HA!
AT THAT MOMENT, TOPSIDE...
IRV! IRV! LOOK AT THIS--!
PIPE DOWN, MATEY! YOU'RE TRYIN' TO SPOOK THE LAND-LUBBERS! THIS AIN'T SUPPOSED TO BE NOTHIN' BUT A PLEASURE CRUISE, REMEMBER?
I KNOW! BUT WHADDA WE TELL 'EM WHEN THEY ASK WHAT THE HELL A SPERM WHALE IS DOIN'...
...IN THE MISSISSIPPI DELTA?!
TELL THEM IT'S MAKING A SPECIAL DELIVERY, RUMMY!
SPOOOSH
AQUAMAN!!
WHOK
WHOK
THE SEA KING'S DRAMATIC ENTRANCE IS CLOSELY FOLLOWED BY AQUAGIRL, WHO SCRABBLES UP A [illegible] CONSTRUCTED BY COOPERATIVE EELS, AND..
THAT CHICK WITH HIM!-- AIN'T SHE THE BIMBO WE CHAINED..? UNNN!
HNOKK
DON'T REMIND ME, SHRIMP-BRAIN! HOW'D YOU LIKE TO END UP DRESSED LIKE MARLEY'S GHOST?

UH, DON'T LOOK NOW, YOUR MAJESTY-- BUT THE MANTA'S GOT A STAFF THE SIZE OF A BANANA REPUBLIC'S ARMY!
NOT A PROBLEM...
...OBSERVE!
AGAIN THE MARINE MARVEL EXERCISES HIS UNIQUE ABILITY TO TELEPATHICALLY COMMAND THE CREATURES OF THE DEEP.
..AND IN RESPONSE TO THE MENTAL SUMMONS COME--
JELLYFISH?!
NO--NOT JELLYFISH, BUT PORTUGUESE MEN-OF-WAR, IMPORTED FROM THE GULF STREAM FOR THE OCCASION!
BUT DON'T GET EXCITED--THE COAST GUARD WILL BE ALONG IN A FEW MINUTES...
...SO YOU CAN NURSE YOUR STINGS IN THE NEAREST PRISON INFIRMARY!
WHILE ELSEWHERE...
FURTHERMORE, I'VE DEADENED THE BRAINS OF ALL MY LITTLE FRIENDS...
...SO THAT EVEN IF YOU POSSESS YOUR ELDER COLLEAGUE'S PERSUASIVE ABILITIES, NOTHING CAN SAVE YOU- EH?!
SOMETHING OUTSIDE--?
MY MEN--DISARMED! ONLY ONE MAN COULD DO THAT--
AQUAMA-
UGGH!
WHO WERE YOU EXPECTING-- JACQUES COUSTEAU?!

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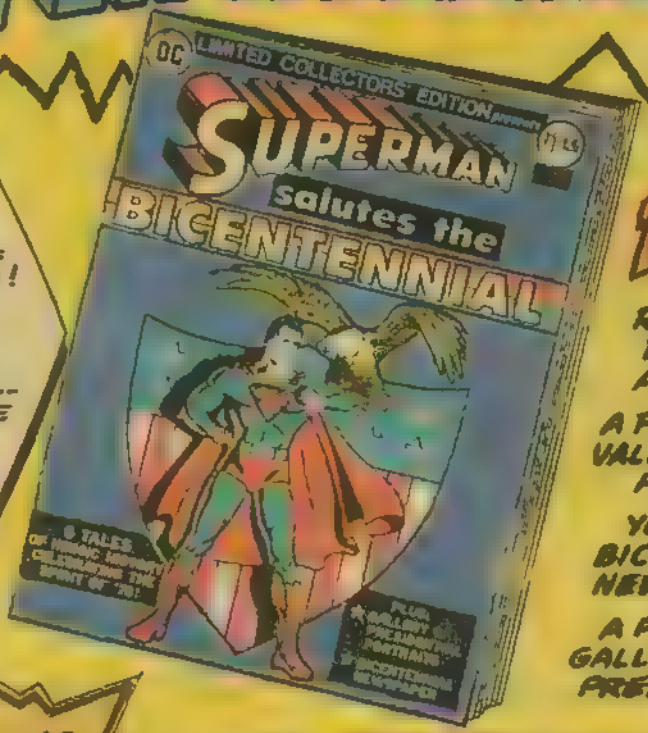

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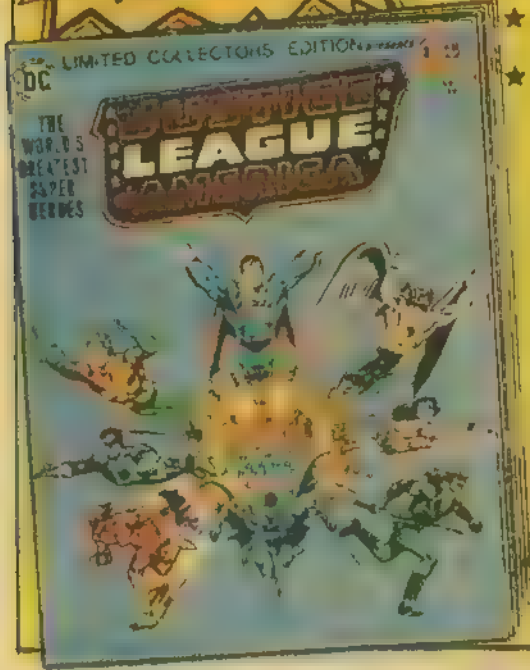

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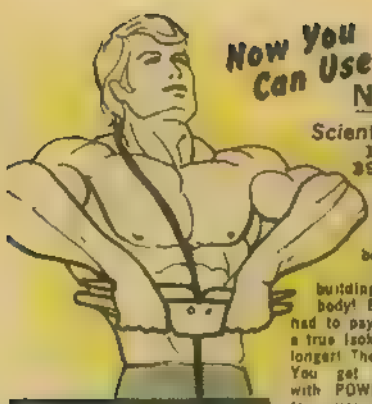
YOU COMPARE UNFAVORABLY THERE, AQUAMAN--YOU HAVEN'T A GLIMMER OF THAT OLD GENTLEMAN'S INTELLIGENCE!
AND IF YOUR GLADITORIAL INEPTITUDE IS ANY INDICATION...
KLUK
...BY COMPARISON, YOU'RE THE ANCIENT ONE!
NO WONDER YOUR FORMER SUBJECTS FELT IT NECESSARY TO DEEP-SIX YOU!
HOW DOES HE KNOW--?!
NO MATTER--IN YOUR CONDITION, [illegible] WITH THE MANTA-RAY WILL BE A TRIFLE!
BUT THE AQUATIC ARISTOCRAT DODGES NIMBLY AS MUSCLES HONED BY YEARS OF SWIMMING SPRING INTO ACTION!
AND LEST YOU THINK WE'VE FORGOTTEN TWO IMPORTANT MEMBERS OF OUR CAST, GENTLE READER...
TULA!
SURE, LOVER! EVEN THOUGH YOU TREAT ME LIKE A BUDDY...
...THAT'S NO REASON TO LET YOU GET SNUFFED!
I'M NOT AS FEEBLE AS YOU THINK! I HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN ABOUT YOUR RAY...
...OR HOW TO DISABLE IT AT ITS CONTROL-CENTER!
ENJOY YOURSELF WHILE YOU CAN--FOR EVEN AS WE FIGHT, AQUALAD DIES! HA HA HA HA HA!
GUESS AGAIN, BRIGHT-EYES!
WHO--?!
JUST YOUR FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD FISH-BAIT--ME!

KRTAK
THAT'S IT, MANTA-- GROVEL! BECAUSE NOW I'VE GOT YOU WHERE I WANT YOU!
CORRECTION, SEA KING--
--NOW YOU'VE GOT ME WHERE I WANT ME! HA HA HA!
IN VAIN, THE TRIO ATTEMPTS TO PURSUE BLACK MANTA--BUT IN MINUTES, A HATCH OPENS..
..AND THE AWESOME MANTA-SHIP EMERGES FROM A SECRET DOCKING BAY WITHIN THE SHOW-BOAT'S HULL...
LOOK! HEY, GETTING AWAY!
RELAX, MINNOW-- I HAVE THAT CONTINGENCY COVERED!



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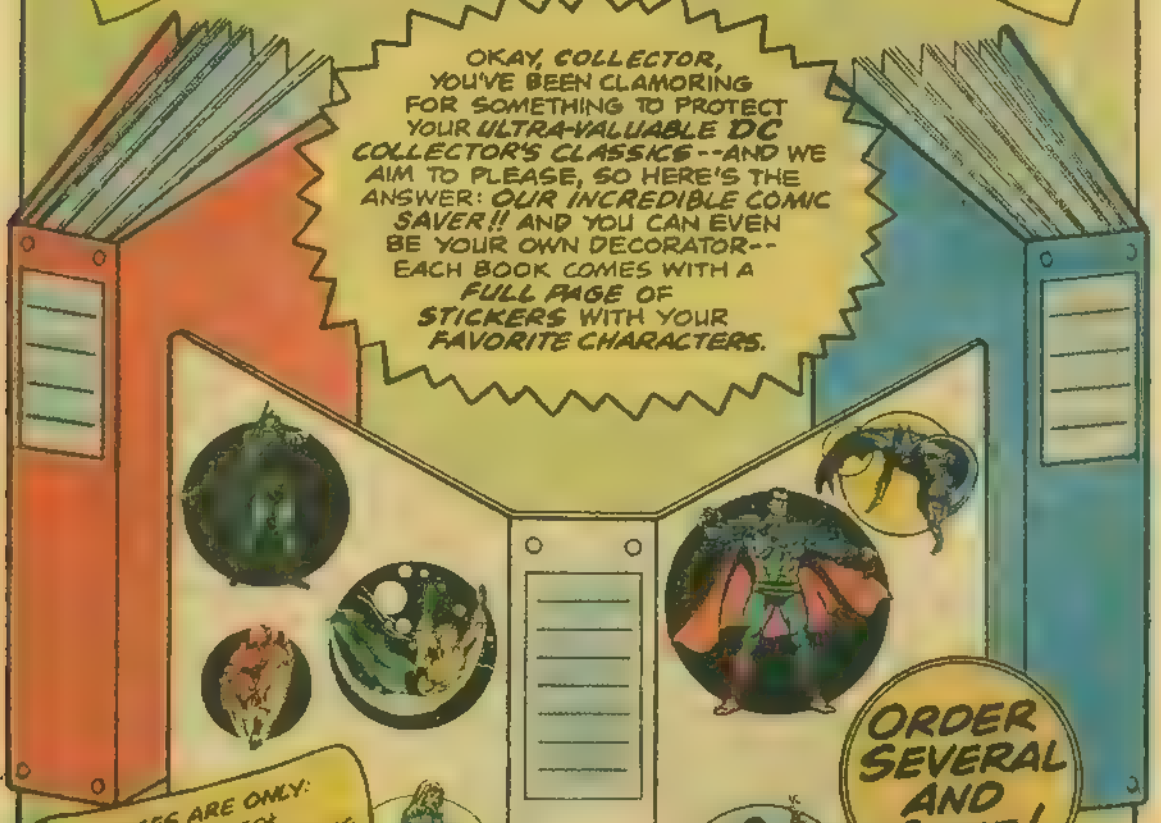

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ACTION LURE swims, dives like a crippled minnow! Darts like a dying insect! Drives pan fish, game fish, salt water fish into a frenzy! Gets savage bites that simply can't pull loose from your hook!

Completely under its own power, ACTION LURE swims and dives like a live darting minnow, then returns to the surface to dive again and again, even on a slack line! As amazing ACTION LURE dives down deep to where the big ones are lurking, fish see its free swimming action, hear its buzzing sound, and bite savagely utterly without fear or hesitation!

Swims & dives to 15 feet!
No jigging or pulling!

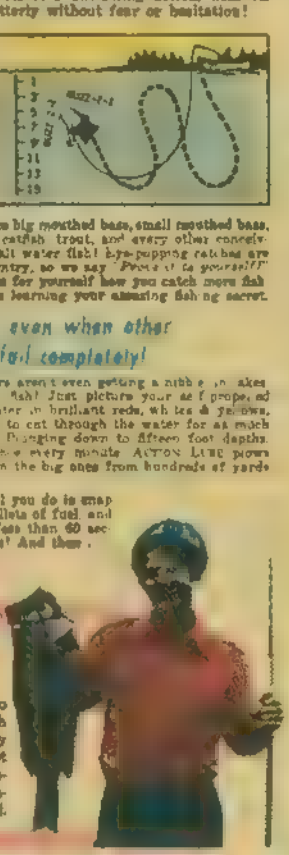
ACTION LURE swings by itself without being pulled. It swims various depths down to 15 feet for up to one hour or more, with a slow erratic wounded minnow motion that no fresh or salt water fish can resist all the time sending out its enticing buzzing insect sound to attract fish from yards away!

Yes, ACTION LURE hauls in trophy size big mouthed bass, small mouthed bass, pike, muskeral, perch, walleye, dogfish, catfish, trout, and every other conceivable type of pan fish, game fish and salt water fish! Eye-popping catches are reported from every section of the country, so we say "Prove it to yourself!" Use ACTION LURE for a full month, see for yourself how you catch more fish bigger fish, how your friends insist on learning your amazing fishing secret.

Works like magic even when other lures and bait fail completely!

You'll haul in limit catches when others aren't even getting a nibble. In lakes, streams, rivers, oceans, wherever you fish! Just picture your self-propelled ACTION LURE slashing through the water in brilliant reds, whites & yellows, only 2" long yet carrying enough line to cast through the water for as much as one full mile with a single load! Plunging down to fifteen foot depths, rising again to the surface a moment or two every minute. ACTION LURE plows through the water tirelessly, pulling in the big ones from hundreds of yards around you!

Here's how ACTION LURE works. All you do is snap open the fuel chamber, drop in two pellets of fuel, and close the fuel chamber again. Takes less than 60 seconds; you don't even dirty your hands! And then simply cast or lower ACTION LURE into fresh or salt water, and get set *for the fishing thrill of your life!*



ACTION LURE GUARANTEE

ACTION LURE is guaranteed to catch more fish and bigger fish in every kind of water, in every kind of weather. If you are not completely satisfied in every respect, return ACTION LURE within 30 days for complete refund.

For perhaps one minute ACTION LURE will float quietly, then, as water reaches the fuel, your lure will seem to shudder for a second, then spring dramatically to "life!" Making the buzzing sound of a dying bee, ACTION LURE will point its nose downward, and begin its first descent! Slowly, jerkily, like a maimed minnow it will swim noisily downward, buzzing and humming, traveling about nine feet every fifteen seconds! If no fish intercepts it, its descent automatically stops, it slowly raises up its nose and climbs to the surface again!

And again! And again! Tirelessly, hour after hour, far beyond the reach of your own casts! Roaming restlessly over every foot of water beneath you – even on a slack line – even when your boat is tied up – even when you're carried upon the deck, sound asleep! And all the while ACTION LURE is swimming and buzzing and diving the fish around you in such a frenzy they practically tear the rod out of your hands!

World's First self-propelled lure!

No wonder this revolutionary ACTION LURE took six full years to develop! Here's what ACTION LURE will do for YOU!

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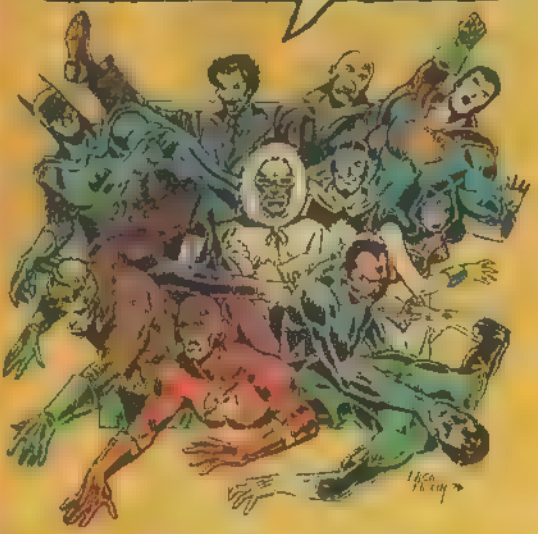

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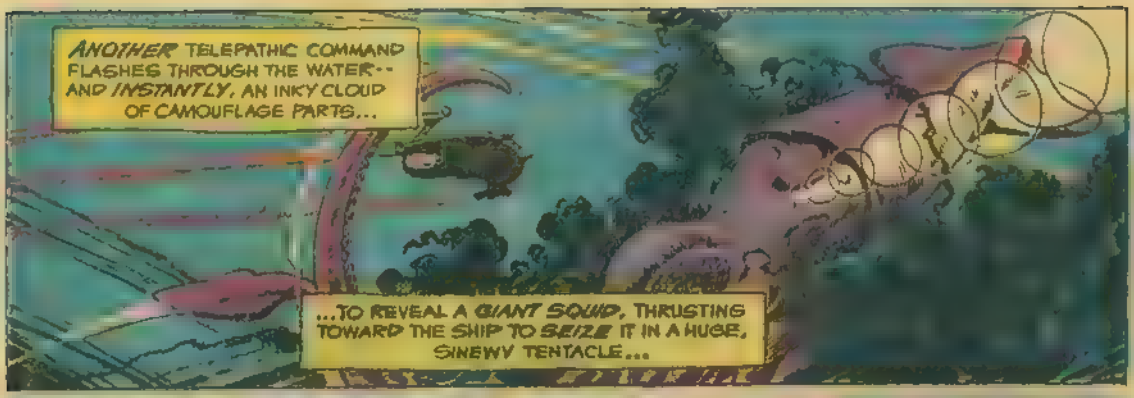
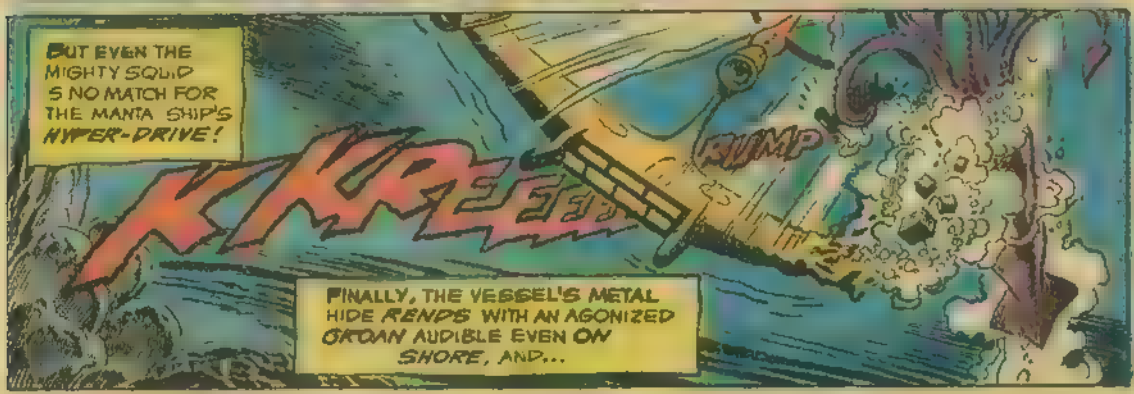
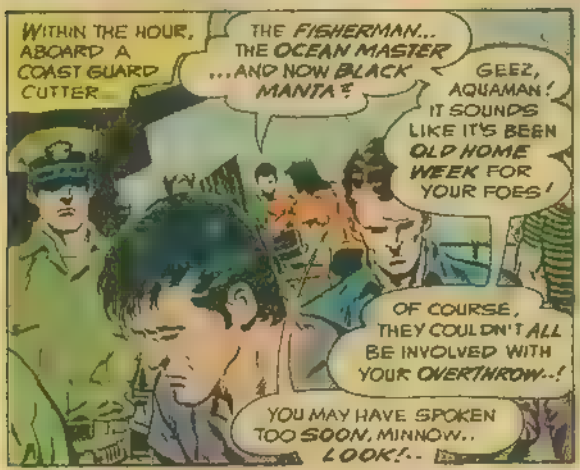
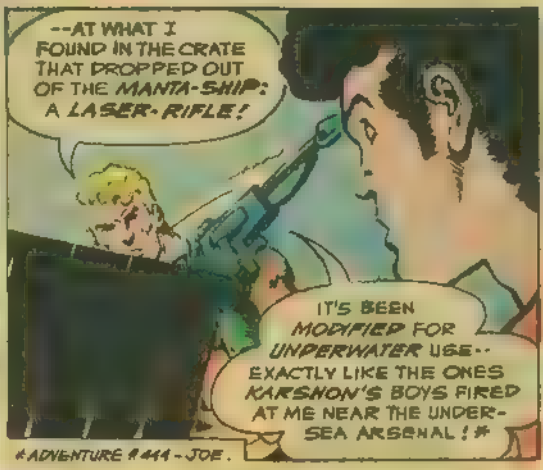

ANOTHER TELEPATHIC COMMAND FLASHES THROUGH THE WATER-- AND INSTANTLY, AN INKY CLOUD OF CAMOUFLAGE PARTS...
...TO REVEAL A GIANT SQUID, THRUSTING TOWARD THE SHIP TO SEIZE IT IN A HUGE, SINEWY TENTACLE...


BUT EVEN THE MIGHTY SQUID IS NO MATCH FOR THE MANTA SHIP'S HYPER-DRIVE!
KKREEEE
KUMP
FINALLY, THE VESSEL'S METAL HIDE RENDS WITH AN AGONIZED GROAN AUDIBLE EVEN ON SHORE, AND...


WITHIN THE HOUR, ABOARD A COAST GUARD CUTTER...
THE FISHERMAN... THE OCEAN MASTER ...AND NOW BLACK MANTA!
GEEZ, AQUAMAN! IT SOUNDS LIKE IT'S BEEN OLD HOME WEEK FOR YOUR FOES!
OF COURSE, THEY COULDN'T ALL BE INVOLVED WITH YOUR OVERTHROW--!
YOU MAY HAVE SPOKEN TOO SOON, MINNOW.. LOOK!--

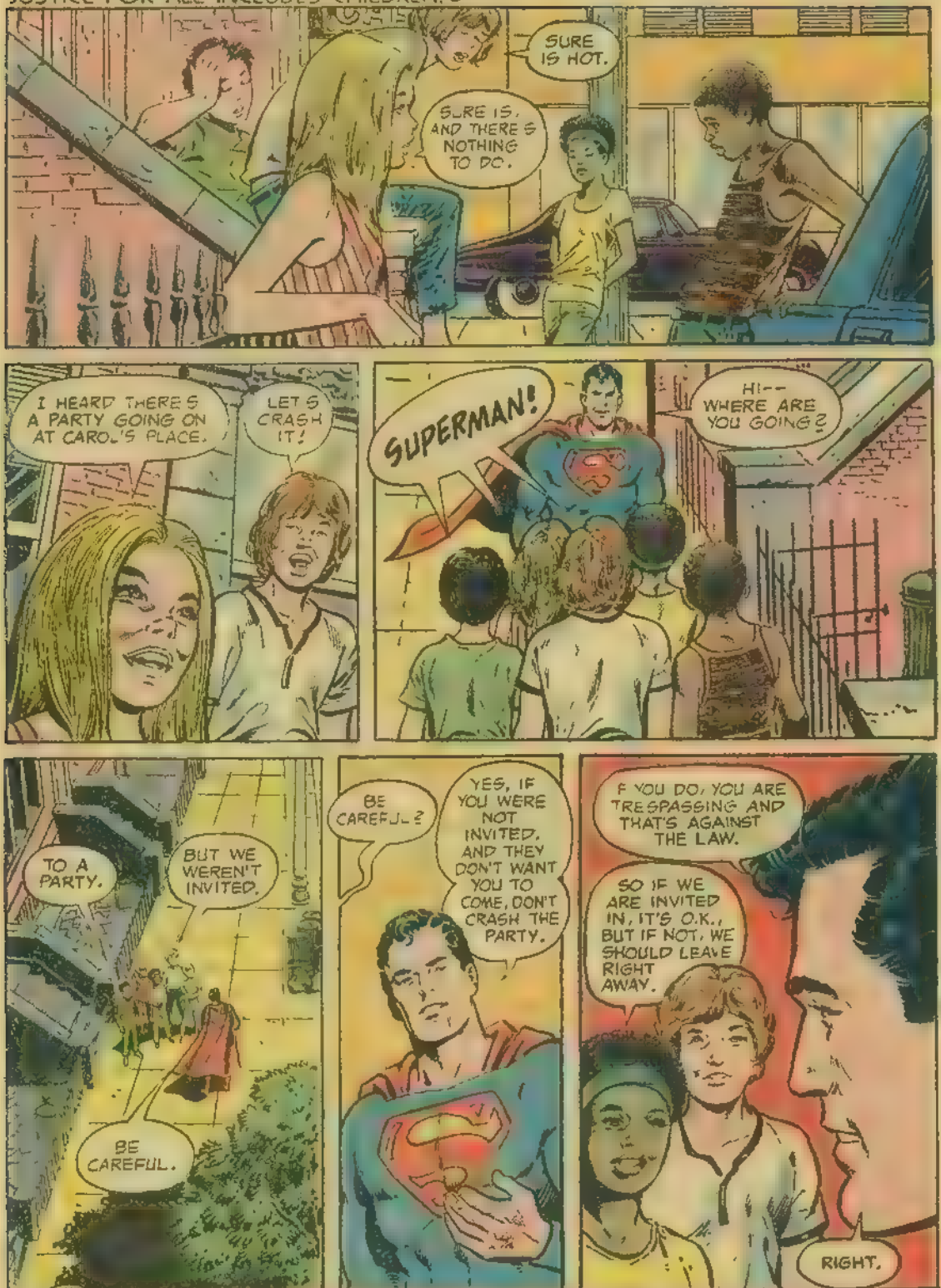

--AT WHAT I FOUND IN THE CRATE THAT DROPPED OUT OF THE MANTA-SHIP: A LASER-RIFLE!
IT'S BEEN MODIFIED FOR UNDERWATER USE-- EXACTLY LIKE THE ONES KARSHON'S BOYS FIRED AT ME NEAR THE UNDER-SEA ARSENAL!*
*ADVENTURE #444 - JOE.

NEXT:

- MORE ADVENTURES ON THE SURFACE!
- THE SECRET LASER STOCKPILE IN ATLANTIS--REVEALED!
- MERA AND ARTHUR, JR.--THREATENED!
- AND THE RETURN OF THE DEADLY FISHERMAN!

IN... "PRELUDE TO ARMAGEDDON!"

ON SALE DURING THE LAST WEEK IN JUNE


SURE IS HOT.
SURE IS, AND THERE'S NOTHING TO DO.
I HEARD THERE'S A PARTY GOING ON AT CAROL'S PLACE.
LET'S CRASH IT!
SUPERMAN!
HI-- WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
TO A PARTY.
BUT WE WEREN'T INVITED.
BE CAREFUL.
BE CAREFUL?
YES, IF YOU WERE NOT INVITED, AND THEY DON'T WANT YOU TO COME, DON'T CRASH THE PARTY.
IF YOU DO, YOU ARE TRESPASSING AND THAT'S AGAINST THE LAW.
SO IF WE ARE INVITED IN, IT'S O.K., BUT IF NOT, WE SHOULD LEAVE RIGHT AWAY.
RIGHT.

THIS KIND OF DC SUPER-STARS

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It may seem odd at first — the idea of teaching yourself music. You might think you need a private teacher at $4 to $10 per hour to stand beside you and explain everything you should do — and to tell you when you've made a mistake.

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With our lessons, you learn to play the right way — by note from regular sheet music. Without any gadgetry or gimmickry. And all it costs you is just pennies a day.

You don't need any previous musical training. Our lessons start you off "from scratch" with clear word-and-picture instructions. A lot of the songs you practice first are simple tunes you've heard many times. And since you already know how these tunes are supposed to sound, you can tell immediately when you've "got them right."

Then you go on to more advanced pieces. By this time you can tell if your notes and timing are right, even without ever having heard the songs before. Sooner than you might think possible, you'll be able to play whatever kind of music you like: Folk. Popular. Classical. Show and dance tunes. Hymns.

You learn in your spare time, in the privacy and comfort of your own home. There's no one standing over you to make you nervous. And because you teach yourself, you can set your own pace. You're free to spend as much time mastering any lesson as you wish.

How effective are the lessons? Ask Jeffrey Livingston of York, Pa. "I thought the organ course was excellent," he writes. "I knew almost nothing about playing an instrument before I enrolled. Now I can play not only the organ, but the piano too. My new music ability has enabled me to play at churches and small conventions. I am even considering making music my career."

Another recent graduate, Cecelia Feeney of Vineland, N.J., reports: "It's like a dream come true. Knowing how to play the piano and read music has given me new self-confidence."

If you've ever dreamed of being able to play the piano, the guitar, or the spinet organ, why not learn more about our convenient, economical way to learn? Send for our free booklet *Be Your Own Music Teacher*. With it we'll include a free "Note-Finder." There's no obligation. Just mail the coupon to the U.S. SCHOOL OF MUSIC, A Home Study School Since 1898, 417 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois 60605.

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[illegible] absolutely complete [illegible] system [illegible] go no [illegible] new inches in [illegible] days [illegible] Absolutely [illegible] immediate refund. My system [illegible] famous [illegible] It is our belief this renowned method is the world's most effective bodybuilding plan because it lets you attain a big chest first. Then at your own convenience add a total of 6 8 10 12 to 20 inches on chest back and shoulders [illegible]

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Research shows people usually judge a guy by the size of his chest Why look around Do guys parade about town in swim shirts? No! Everybody wears clothes While your other muscles can be [illegible] A big [illegible] and [illegible] can be concealed under pants Arm muscles can be hidden under sleeves But a big chest is an attention-getter It can indicate virility [illegible] and [illegible] age

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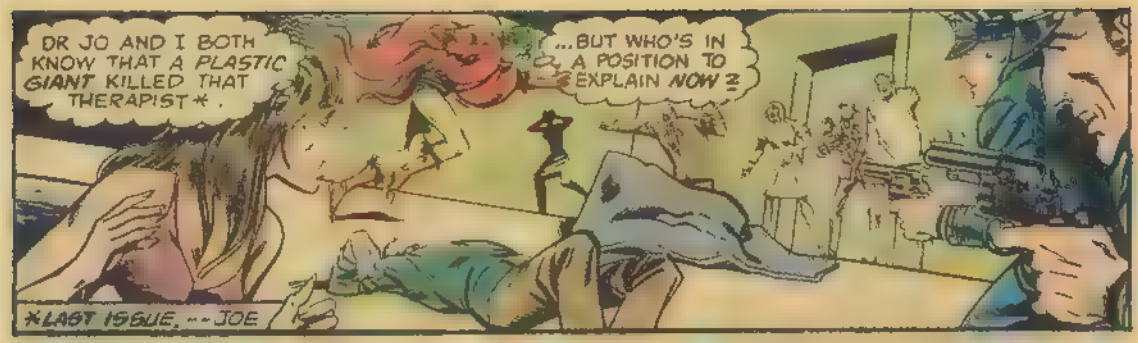
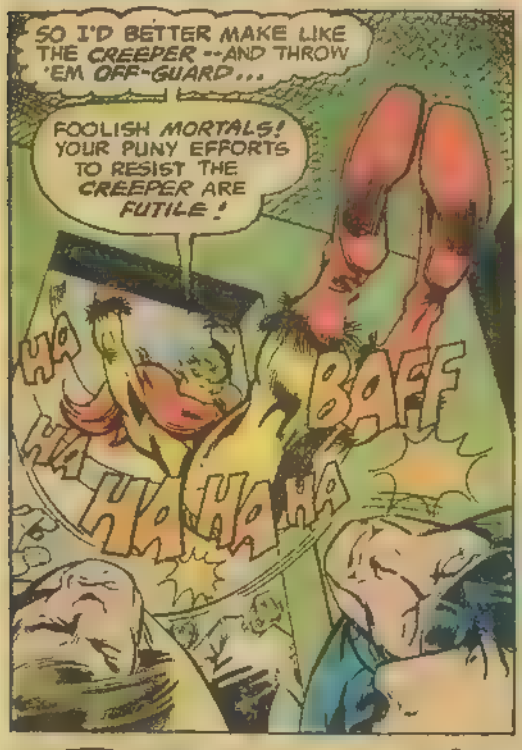
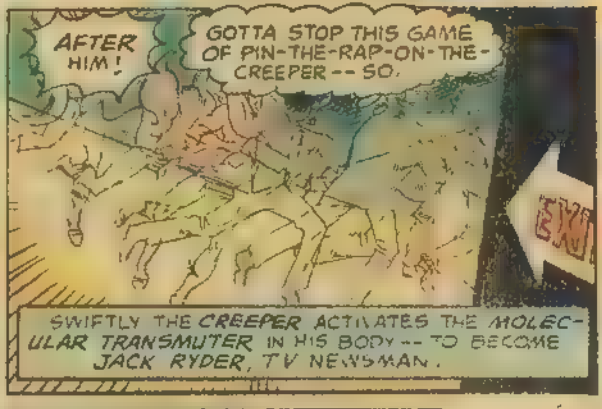
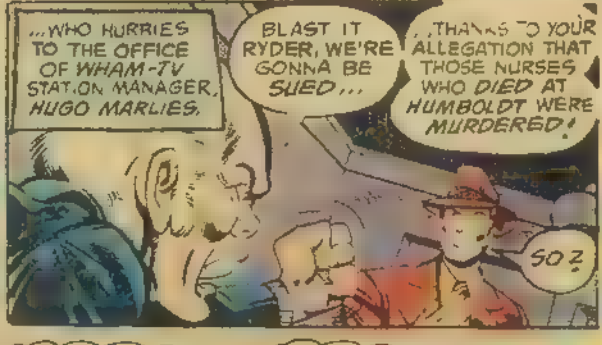
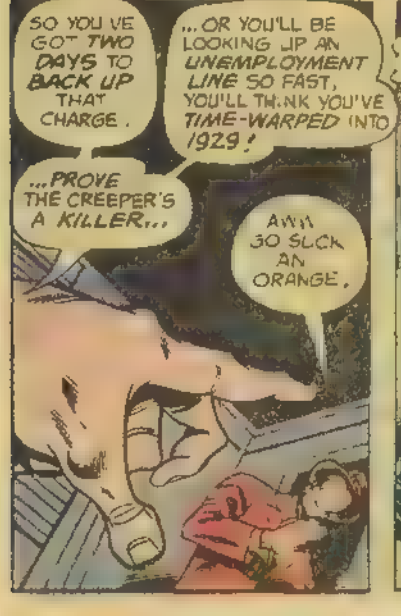
THE STERILE ROOM IS DAMP AND SWELTERING--AN OPPRESSIVENESS INTENSIFIED BY THE SILENT CHALLENGE OF FOUR GRIM POLICE SPECIALS AIMED AT A YELLOW-GARBED INTRUDER.
A THERAPIST LIES DEAD ON THE TILE FLOORING. A WOMAN--DR. JOANNE RUSSELL--STRUGGLES TOWARD CONSCIOUSNESS...AND THE THING RESPONSIBLE FOR THE BRUTALITY IS LONG GONE!
CRACK
THE STRANGER IS ALONE TO TAKE THE BLAME--AND LEFT WITH NO CHOICE BUT TO DEMONSTRATE TO THE CLINIC'S SECURITY GUARDS WHY MOST MORTAL MEN...
Beware THE CREEPER
MIND OVER MURDER
SPLASH
THWAK
POW
MARTIN PASKO — WRITER
RIC ESTRADA & JOE STATON/ARTISTS
JOE ORLANDO — EDITOR
CARL GAFFORD—COLORIST

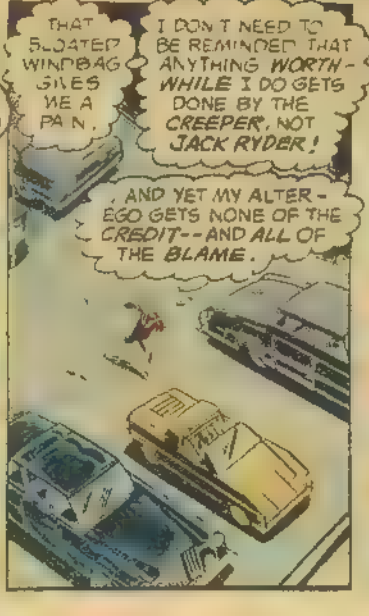

DR JO AND I BOTH KNOW THAT A PLASTIC GIANT KILLED THAT THERAPIST*.
...BUT WHO'S IN A POSITION TO EXPLAIN NOW?
*LAST ISSUE. --JOE


SO I'D BETTER MAKE LIKE THE CREEPER --AND THROW 'EM OFF-GUARD...
FOOLISH MORTALS! YOUR PUNY EFFORTS TO RESIST THE CREEPER ARE FUTILE!
HA HA HA HA HA
BAFF

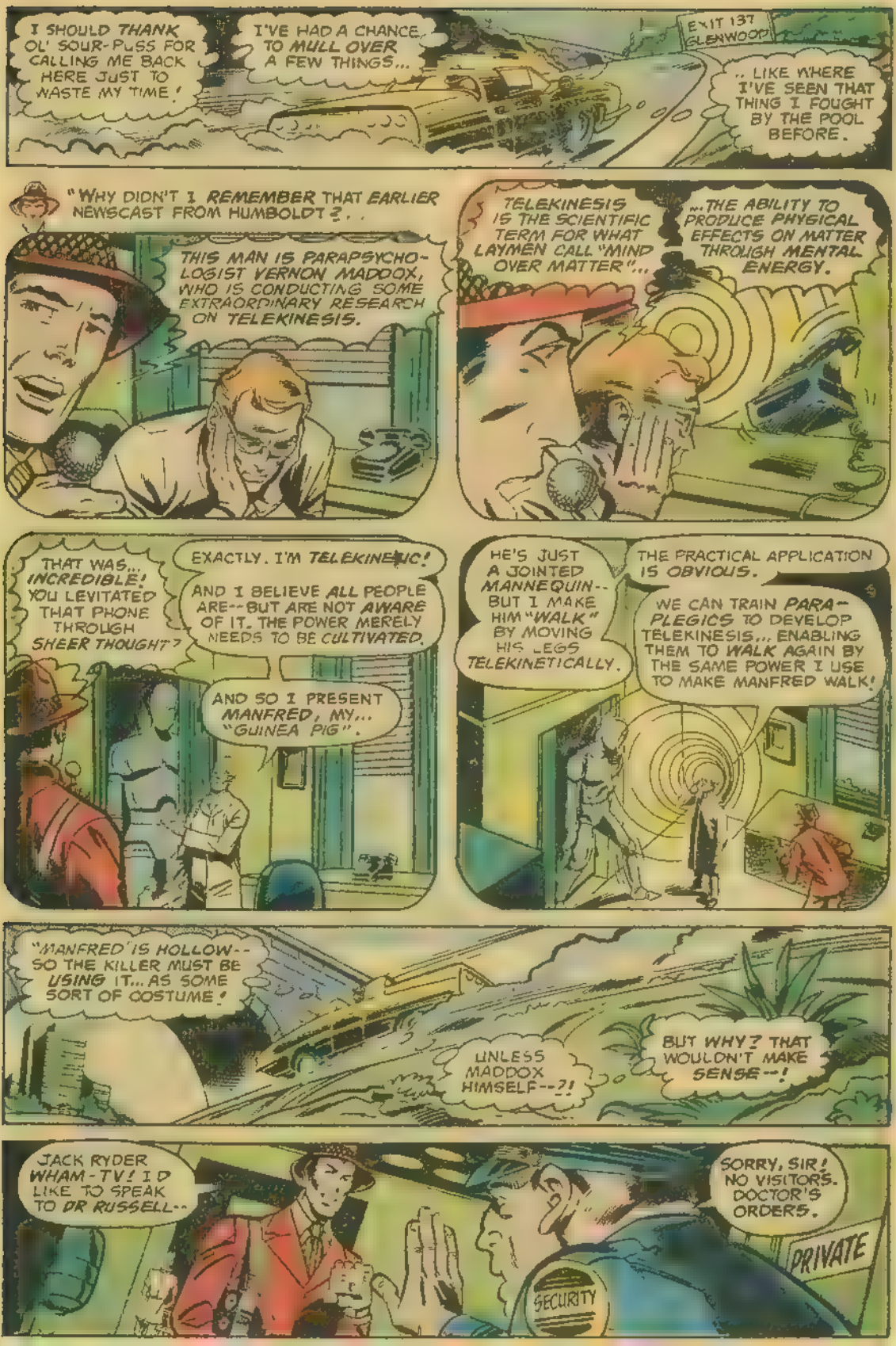

AFTER HIM!
GOTTA STOP THIS GAME OF PIN-THE-RAP-ON-THE-CREEPER -- SO.
SWIFTLY THE CREEPER ACTIVATES THE MOLECULAR TRANSMUTER IN HIS BODY -- TO BECOME JACK RYDER, TV NEWSMAN.

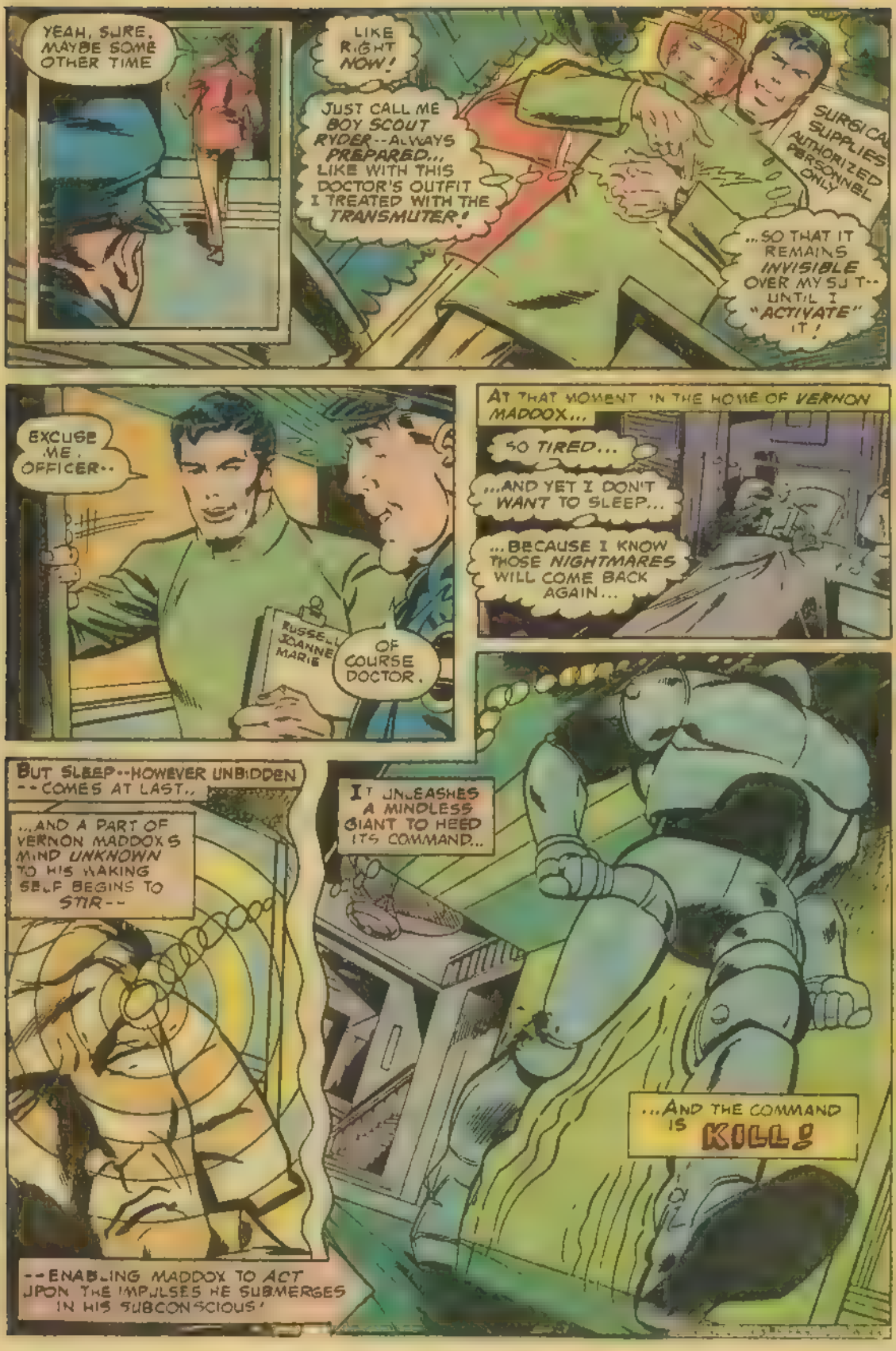

...WHO HURRIES TO THE OFFICE OF WHAM-TV STATION MANAGER, HUGO MARLIES.
BLAST IT RYDER, WE'RE GONNA BE SUED...
...THANKS TO YOUR ALLEGATION THAT THOSE NURSES WHO DIED AT HUMBOLDT WERE MURDERED!
SO?


SO YOU'VE GOT TWO DAYS TO BACK UP THAT CHARGE.
...OR YOU'LL BE LOOKING UP AN UNEMPLOYMENT LINE SO FAST, YOU'LL THINK YOU'VE TIME-WARPED INTO 1929!
...PROVE THE CREEPER'S A KILLER...
AWW SO SUCK AN ORANGE.


THAT BLOATED WINDBAG GIVES ME A PAIN.
I DON'T NEED TO BE REMINDED THAT ANYTHING WORTHWHILE I DO GETS DONE BY THE CREEPER, NOT JACK RYDER!
AND YET MY ALTER-EGO GETS NONE OF THE CREDIT--AND ALL OF THE BLAME.

WELL... JACK E-BOY
NOBODY EVER SAID LIFE WAS FAIR.


I SHOULD THANK OL' SOUR-PUSS FOR CALLING ME BACK HERE JUST TO WASTE MY TIME!
I'VE HAD A CHANCE TO MULL OVER A FEW THINGS...
EXIT 137 GLENWOOD
.. LIKE WHERE I'VE SEEN THAT THING I FOUGHT BY THE POOL BEFORE.
"WHY DIDN'T I REMEMBER THAT EARLIER NEWSCAST FROM HUMBOLDT?..
THIS MAN IS PARAPSYCHOLOGIST VERNON MADDOX, WHO IS CONDUCTING SOME EXTRAORDINARY RESEARCH ON TELEKINESIS.
TELEKINESIS IS THE SCIENTIFIC TERM FOR WHAT LAYMEN CALL "MIND OVER MATTER"...
...THE ABILITY TO PRODUCE PHYSICAL EFFECTS ON MATTER THROUGH MENTAL ENERGY.
THAT WAS... INCREDIBLE! YOU LEVITATED THAT PHONE THROUGH SHEER THOUGHT?
EXACTLY. I'M TELEKINETIC!
AND I BELIEVE ALL PEOPLE ARE--BUT ARE NOT AWARE OF IT. THE POWER MERELY NEEDS TO BE CULTIVATED.
AND SO I PRESENT MANFRED, MY... "GUINEA PIG".
HE'S JUST A JOINTED MANNEQUIN--BUT I MAKE HIM "WALK" BY MOVING HIS LEGS TELEKINETICALLY.
THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION IS OBVIOUS.
WE CAN TRAIN PARAPLEGICS TO DEVELOP TELEKINESIS... ENABLING THEM TO WALK AGAIN BY THE SAME POWER I USE TO MAKE MANFRED WALK!
"MANFRED" IS HOLLOW--SO THE KILLER MUST BE USING IT... AS SOME SORT OF COSTUME!
UNLESS MADDOX HIMSELF--?!
BUT WHY? THAT WOULDN'T MAKE SENSE--!
JACK RYDER WHAM-TV! I'D LIKE TO SPEAK TO DR RUSSELL--
SORRY, SIR! NO VISITORS. DOCTOR'S ORDERS.
PRIVATE
SECURITY


YEAH, SURE, MAYBE SOME OTHER TIME
LIKE RIGHT NOW!
JUST CALL ME BOY SCOUT RYDER--ALWAYS PREPARED... LIKE WITH THIS DOCTOR'S OUTFIT I TREATED WITH THE TRANSMUTER!
SURGICAL SUPPLIES AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY
...SO THAT IT REMAINS INVISIBLE OVER MY SUIT--UNTIL I "ACTIVATE" IT!
EXCUSE ME, OFFICER--
RUSSELL JOANNE MARIE
OF COURSE DOCTOR.
AT THAT MOMENT IN THE HOME OF VERNON MADDOX...
SO TIRED...
...AND YET I DON'T WANT TO SLEEP...
...BECAUSE I KNOW THOSE NIGHTMARES WILL COME BACK AGAIN...
BUT SLEEP--HOWEVER UNBIDDEN--COMES AT LAST...
...AND A PART OF VERNON MADDOX'S MIND UNKNOWN TO HIS WAKING SELF BEGINS TO STIR--
IT UNLEASHES A MINDLESS GIANT TO HEED ITS COMMAND...
...AND THE COMMAND IS KILL!
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- [ ] 32 TARZAN #251
- [ ] 33 DC SUPER STARS #5

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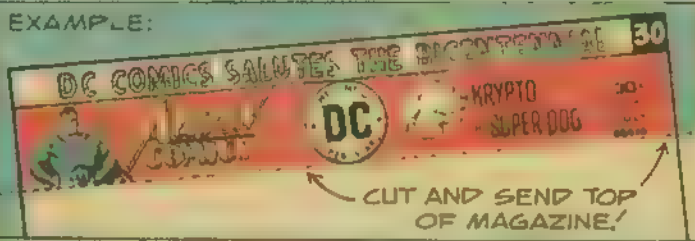

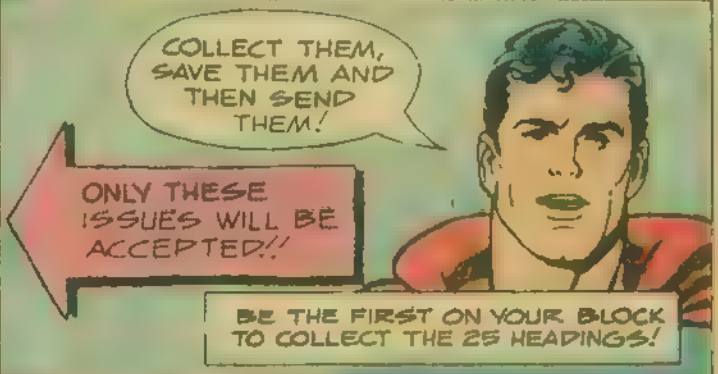
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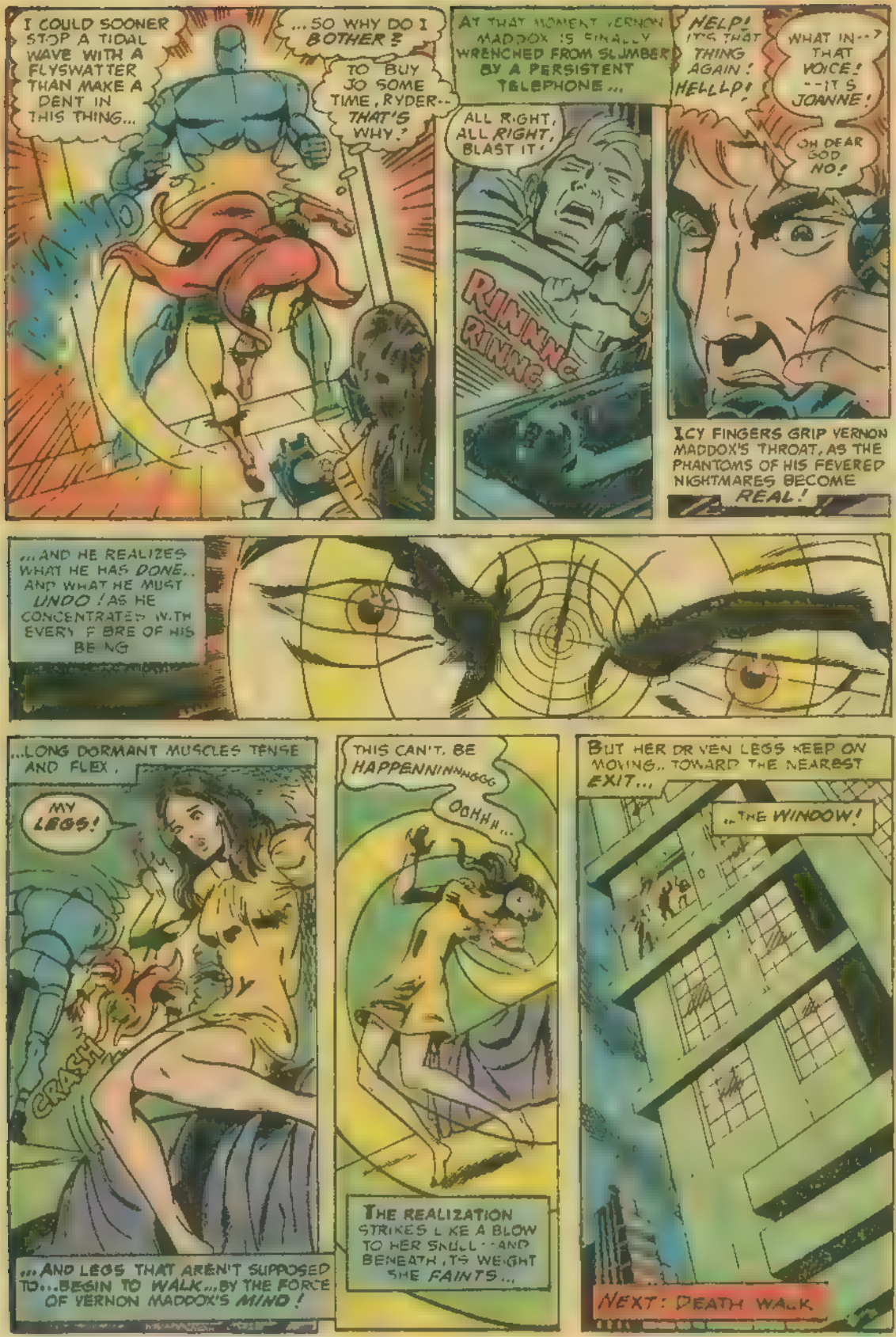
AT THAT MOMENT IN DR JOANNE RUSSELL'S ROOM
YOU! YOU'RE THE GUY WHO SAVED ME FROM THAT GIANT THING! HOW DID YOU--?
THE CREEPER WILL MAKE THE INQUIRIES HERE MORTAL WOMAN!
GOTTA PLAY A LONG SHOT
HE WHO ATTEMPTS TO SLAY YOU IS VERNON MADDOX!
WHY DOES HE WISH YOU DEAD? SPEAK!
"VERN? THAT'S ...RIDICULOUS! EVEN IF HE DID THINK MY RESEARCH WAS A THREAT TO HIM SOMEHOW, THAT'S ALL ENDED NOW--SINCE MY ACCIDENT..."
"I'LL NEVER UNDERSTAND HOW I SWERVED INTO THAT POLE! MY HAND JERKED THE STEERING WHEEL ...AS IF OF ITS OWN ACCORD!"
MUST... KNOCK OUT. GUARD.
WHAMM!
I WAS DEVELOPING A NEW FORM OF THERAPY... MADDOX AND I WERE COMPETING FOR A GOVERNMENT GRANT, AND--
QUICKLY DOCTOR, DIAL HIS TELEPHONE NUMBER!
JUST DO IT!
WHAAT?
KRAAOOMM!
SUDDENLY, THERE'S A SOUND LIKE KINDLING BEING CRUSHED...
...AS MIGHTY PLAS-FISTS SHATTER THE DOOR INTO TOOTHPICKS!
¡UNNH! HERE... WE GO... AGAIN...!
KRAAAK!


I COULD SOONER STOP A TIDAL WAVE WITH A FLYSWATTER THAN MAKE A DENT IN THIS THING...
...SO WHY DO I BOTHER?
TO BUY JO SOME TIME, RYDER-- THAT'S WHY.
AT THAT MOMENT VERNON MADDOX IS FINALLY WRENCHED FROM SLUMBER BY A PERSISTENT TELEPHONE...
ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT, BLAST IT!
RINNNG RINNG
HELP! IT'S THAT THING AGAIN! HELLLP!
WHAT IN--? THAT VOICE! --IT'S JOANNE!
OH DEAR GOD NO!
ICY FINGERS GRIP VERNON MADDOX'S THROAT, AS THE PHANTOMS OF HIS FEVERED NIGHTMARES BECOME REAL!
...AND HE REALIZES WHAT HE HAS DONE.. AND WHAT HE MUST UNDO! AS HE CONCENTRATES WITH EVERY FIBRE OF HIS BEING
...LONG DORMANT MUSCLES TENSE AND FLEX.
MY LEGS!
CRASH
...AND LEGS THAT AREN'T SUPPOSED TO...BEGIN TO WALK...BY THE FORCE OF VERNON MADDOX'S MIND!
THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENNINNNGGG
OOHH!...
THE REALIZATION STRIKES LIKE A BLOW TO HER SKULL--AND BENEATH, ITS WEIGHT SHE FAINTS...
BUT HER DRIVEN LEGS KEEP ON MOVING.. TOWARD THE NEAREST EXIT...
..THE WINDOW!
NEXT: DEATH WALK

DATELINE: ADVENTURE

Dear Joe,

My letters must be getting awfully redundant, but I can't seem to find anything wrong with the **Aquaman** series in **ADVENTURE COMICS**. In the space of only four issues, the creative team of Levitz, Aparo, and Orlando have taken the best features of the old **Aquaman** days and incorporated them into an excellent plotline. Consider: the King of Atlantis dethroned and wrongly accused of stealing Serum X, unable to return to his undersea city. I've always been a sucker for a good series, and this one at least has the potential. Despite momentary lapses like another (yawn) shark menace, I'm sorry to see Paul leave the book. But, being a sophomore in college myself, I know what he's going through.

Is Gerry going to stay on as permanent scripter? I can think of worse people for the job, but Gerry's dialog tends to be uneven. One sequence gives serious insight into the hero's character, the next descends into soap opera schmaltz. One bit of advice, however: try to keep the same scripter on the whole series—with a half a dozen different authors you'll endanger the complex continuity you've worked so hard to build up.

It's rather ironic that I'm penning this on the afternoon of New Year's Day. If "And Death Before Dishonor" is any indication of what this six-issue series is going to be like, this will probably be **ADVENTURE'S** best year in quite some time.

Kevin L. Callahan, Brea, California

As things stand now, this issue introduces the permanent team for AQUAMAN, with Paul doing the plotting and Marty Pasko doing the dialog. At least they're currently working on #447's "Prelude To Armageddon" and plans are forming for the novel-length "Crown, Crisis And Cataclysm" in the following issue.

• • • • •

Dear Joe,

Every once in a while, there is a comic book or comic series that is so distinctive, so perfectly flavored under a certain editorial team that I wouldn't ever want to see it in anyone else's hands. I would rather see the series die and fade forever into limbo than see it exhumed and then wrecked in the hands of a well-meaning editor and/or writer who would completely destroy the unique feeling the strip had previously had. Such a series is **Doom Patrol**. Boltinoff and Drake handled it just right. Unless they were the team to revive it, I wouldn't want it revived. I feel the same way about the **Secret Six**. And I felt the same way about **Aquaman**.

Dick Giordano had taken a relatively lifeless series and given it a drive and an atmosphere that made it one of DC's most three-dimensional, interesting books ever. Then it died. Then you revived it. And you seemed to immediately grasp the aura of the Sea King and his world. Unlike other superheroes, when you write about **Aquaman** you are simultaneously painting a picture of an entire society and cast of supporting characters; a whole other way of life. For **Aquaman** can never be a character totally isolated and to himself—he is **who** he is because Mera and Atlantis and a thousand loyal subjects and his special powers have combined to make him the man he is. Without these things, he is not a whole character. "And Death Before Dishonor" is but your third triumphant study into the workings of perhaps the greatest fantasy that comics have ever created. **You**, Joe: you and Jim and Paul have restored the austere and many-faceted personality to this series. You have done that and already gone far beyond the plateaus that Giordano elevated **Aquaman** to.

ADVENTURE #444 was a dedicated masterworking of character-study, intricate plot-weaving and 'rock-em sock-em' action. The serialized adventure seems to bring out the best in **Aquaman**. Where it sometimes detracts from and hurts **other** super-heroes, the continued story lends itself unselfishly to our "Marine Marvel", allowing for introspective moments and honest emotional scenes which can never be quite as effectively handled in a 12 or 18 page tale.

This new **Aquaman** series is a wonder, Mr. Orlando. Thank you so much. I know you are responsible for making **ADVENTURE** the most entertaining of all comics published today.

Scott Gibson, Evergreen, Colorado

This issue's tale fills out our cast of Aqua-characters and villains for the next few months: AQUAMAN, MERA, ARTHUR JR., AQUALAD, TULA, and VULKO on one side, versus KARSHON, OCEAN MASTER, FISHERMAN, and THE BLACK MANTA. Not all those people interweave in our current epic, but we consider them to be the nucleus of the cast of the series.

• • • • •

Dear Joe,

Quite apparently there is much more to Karshon than meets the eye. I'd say he won't be content with the crown until **Aquaman** is out of the way.

Mera played several good parts in #444, but I expect to see her more often. She used to almost be the co-star of the series.

Aquaman is reaching for the heights he once had, and Aparo's art is as magnificent as ever! Even the coloring was superb!

Scott R. Taylor, Portland, Texas

There certainly is more to Karshon than meets the eye . . . and most of the clues are already in print. To borrow an Ellery Queen motif, we challenge you to solve the secret of Karshon before #448 (—but don't feel too frustrated if you can't, it's a tough puzzle)!

• • • • •

NEXT: THE CREEPER wrap-up, AQUAMAN versus The Fisherman, and more of your comments IF you address them to: DATELINE: ADVENTURE, National Periodical Publications, 75 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, New York 10019.

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Your legs are the seat of your strength and athletic ability. You can have strong, panther-like legs that will make you a star in any sport!

ABDOMEN –
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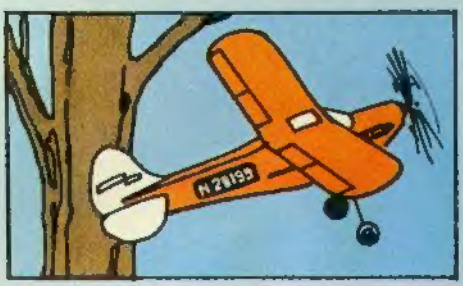

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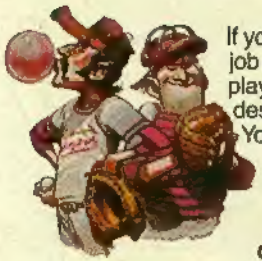
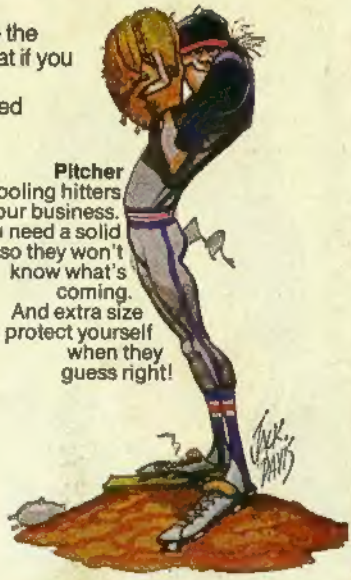
Your game is specialized. Now YourGlove™ is, too!



If you catch or play first, you need a specialized glove to do the job right. Everybody knows that. But what if you pitch? What if you play the infield? Or the outfield? Fact is, you need a glove designed specifically for each position on the field. You need YourGlove™. And only Spalding makes it.



Pitcher
Fooling hitters is your business. You need a solid web so they won't know what's coming. And extra size to protect yourself when they guess right!

Outfield
You need a gigantic glove to reach every ball in the park (and an occasional one that's on its way out of it). The extra flexible H-web helps you line up the ball in the air and hang onto it when it comes down. No matter how hard *you* come down.

Infield
Your glove has to be as quick as you are. It's a wide glove with squared-off fingers so you can get more of it down in front of the ball. It has a shallow pocket so you can find the handle and unload in a hurry. To any base. From any angle.

YourGlove™ by Spalding.
Exclusive features include: single piece Crown Back design for superior shape and comfort; adjustable thumb and finger loops and wrist strap to fit any hand for superior control; top grain American leather to last a lifetime.

YourGlove™ deserves a shirt to match!

For a T-shirt with your position pictured on the front, send $4.95. Or send $2.95 plus the sales receipt and warranty card from YourGlove™ to:

YourGlove™ T-Shirt
P.O. Box 52546
Atlanta, Ga. 30305

Specify position (pitcher, catcher, 1st base, infield or outfield) and adult size (small, medium or large).

SPALDING®

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